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THE OLD-FASHIONED GIRL.

She does not work, she does not paint
Kensington patterns odd and quaint;
A crazy-quilt she ne'er hath made,
Nor stork on tidy yet essayed.

She can not boast a cultured ear;
Beethoven's symphonies, I fear,
She'd call a bore, nor care one bit
What Mrs. Gundy said of it.

She does not poke her elbows out,
Or paint her lips in scarlet pout,
Or smoke her eye-brows to a curve
As fascinating lure to serve.

She does not wear her sleeves so tight
She has to set her hat aright
Before she gets inside her dress
(As fashionable dames confess).

She's fond of horses and of big
And noble dogs; no canine prig
Or bloated and conceited pug
To lie upon aesthetic rug.

She never could be bought or sold;
Her love is worth a nation's gold.
And who the favored one? Ah, well,
'Twould seem like boasting should I tell.

—*C. H. Thayer, in Philadelphia Call.*

A GIRL WIFE.

The Old Bachelor Curate of Amberly.

It was a beautiful young American girl, Lettice Lee by name, who sojourning among her English friends for awhile, crossed their fair garden, bright with the tender greens of Spring and all abloom with hawthorn, and, tempted by the shadows of the lane beyond, strolled slowly down it, until, coming to an old church set about with trees and flanked by an ancient graveyard, she entered there and wandered among the mossy stones, reading their quaint inscriptions and thinking such thoughts as youth and beauty do of graves and death—thinking pityingly and with a certain sad tenderness, but not as of anything with which she had to do, or even would.

The willows were very old. The shade was very deep. The gray church flung its own dark shadows on the spot. The ivy of centuries draped its walls.

It was so different from anything the girl—who had come from the land where all the fine buildings have a brand new look, and even the ivy that is trained against church-walls speaks of a geometrically-minded gardener—had seen, that it fascinated her. She was romantic and poetical; and it is very hard to be romantic in America.

She leaned against a great tree, and looked down upon the gray gravestones. Most of them were so old that no one lived to deck them any more. And yet the ages written on them were often less than her own was that day. One at her very feet bore this inscription:

"Here lieth Lucy—aged sixteen."

A tear came into the girl's eyes as she read it. Perhaps more would have followed, but at that moment a voice close beside her broke the silence.

"You are looking at the graves, my dear. These are only humble stones. Inside the church there are some very fine tombs. If you would like to see them I can tell you all that is known of them. I have been curate of Amberly for thirty years."

The girl turned toward the speaker. Thirty years! That was nearly twice her whole life. A very old man this must be to speak of thirty years as a mere portion of his.

She looked up into his face and answered back the kind smile that shone upon it, and felt a thrill of wonder at the sweetness in the eyes and on the lip, for in her short experience old men were generally either harsh or testy, or at least cold or unsympathizing.

She had no father, or grandfather, or any aged relatives. A little woman, something of an heiress, and very beautiful, she had always been petted by her friends, and had never been unhappy; but of strong home ties that endear even the old and the ugly, she knew nothing. An old gentleman was some one who did not like noise and was rather averse to music, whom it was not unpleasant to see go out of the room, and who generally paid the bills for somebody.

She gave the curate another smile, and said: "Yes, she would like much to see the church and the tombs. Her name was Lettice Lee, and she was visiting Mrs. Holden, at the mansion yonder, and she was just from America for the first time. Perhaps he knew," and the curate signified that he did know, and that Mrs. Holden was his dear old friend, and they went into the church together.

There are old faces that are more beautiful than any young ones can be. Not many, it is true; for the evil passions of our race—anger and greed, and malice and jealousy—are strong within too many breasts, and mark themselves outwardly upon the features, through the long, slow years of a long life, too deeply. Griefs also line themselves upon the brow, and hollow out the cheeks and dim the eyes, but now and then some one, alike strong and sweet, putting by the sin and bearing the sorrow patiently, comes to the autumns of existence with such a countenance as, it seems to me, God meant that an old man should have. The curate of Amberly had done this.

The old bachelor curate had no reminiscences to make of youth sweet, no memory of a young head pillowed on his breast, or fond hands that had clasped his.

Somehow, he thought of this as he ushered the young girl into the old church. She was so fair, and delicate and sweet—her movements were so gentle! A daughter like this now—a ——. He checked the fancy, put it away with a smile, and walked on among the tombs.

On the tomb of Lady Margaret a sculptured form lay with clasped hands and closed eyes. On that of Sir Percival Percy knelt a mailed warrior at prayer. Not more cold and silent and at rest were these than had been the love that should have warmed that good life; and still, with closed eyes, love slumbered in the American girl's breast. They looked at Lady Margaret, at Sir Percival, at the gray tablets in the floor, and the white ones on the wall; at the painted windows and at the strange old Bible and the ancient prayer-books; at the fine carving on pulpit and pews. They talked a great deal to each other, and when at last, she left the church to take her way homeward, he said to her:

"If you should feel like reading, I have a tolerable library; and, though I am an old bachelor, my housekeeper, Mrs. Pratt, is a very good old woman, and will do her best to oblige you in every way. This is my little home, you know," and he pointed to the tiny house that hid itself among the trees.

She thanked him and went her way, full of new softness, and he looked after her.

"I should have liked so very much to kiss her," he said to himself.

It was the first time he had said it of any woman even thus, and the blood flew to his smooth brow as he spoke, and he blamed himself very much; for he knew it was no fatherly kiss of which he thought, did that old curate.

And so strange, sweet friendship grew into existence. The difference in their ages and his office gave them privileges else impossible in decorous England. Lettice could walk and talk with that old curate as much as she chose, and she chose to do it a great deal. The library was an excuse, and there was the garden, and what more proper than that she should go to evening prayer?

And the old curate began very soon to watch for her; to count the moments of her absence, and to know that that which had never come to him in youth had come to him in age; too late for him to taste its sweetness, but not too late to feel the bitterness that love must ever bring when it is nothing but an unrequited longing.

Oh, if he could but keep her thus! he said to himself. If only she could love no one else. And they might be friends forever. Then he could be happy. But this could not be. Young, sweet, beautiful, some one must claim her soon. She would be the wife of a young man. She would love him, and have for the old curate only a kind memory.

All that she knew was that he was graver, and that he did not seem to like her as well as he had done at first. This troubled her, and at last moved her to shun the old library and even the church, and she even shed tears sometimes, wondering how she had offended him. So, in the end, they saw little of each other, and thought a great deal; but his heart gave a wild throb when one day he heard that Lettice Lee was going home to America.

"Would she go without bidding him adieu?" he asked himself. "Would it not be better that she should?" But she did not. She could not. He had been too kind to her, even though he were cold to her now. One morning she came.

She opened the door of his library as he sat staring at a blank of sermon paper, thinking of no text, unless it were this: Love is strong as death, and jealousy is as cruel as the grave; and coming up to him, put out her little hand and said, softly:

"I have come to bid you good-by, sir. I am going away."

He took the hand and arose and led her to a seat, and then they sat quite silent for a while. It was not right for an old heart to beat so fast, and he knew it. At last he spoke:

"I am sorry. I knew that you must go, but I am very sorry."

She gave a little start, and looked full into his eyes. What she saw there, two tears that quivered on the lashes made her put both her little palms upon his arm.

"Sorry?" she said. "Oh, are you really sorry, sir? I—I thought you did not like me any more—that I bored you with my chatter; and so I kept away."

Two hands upon his arm, two blue eyes fixed upon his own, a sweet, quivering red mouth parted with such childish sweetness—do you wonder that the man forgot that he was an old curate?

People are really never old, you know; only this fleshy dwelling of theirs decays, not the heart—the soul. He forgot his gray hairs and his fifty-five years of life, and in a moment he stood almost transfigured before her, flushed with youth's color, bright with love's passion.

"Oh, my little girl, my little girl!" he cried. "Could you not see? Did you not know? Sorry! Ah, when you leave me you take my life with you. I, who never loved any one before, love you madly. My little one, my darling!"

And then it passed. The truth came to him. He turned from her; his face grew gray. He flung himself into a chair and hid his face.

"Good-bye," he faltered. "Forget what the foolish old man has said, and don't think ill of him."

He did not look at her, but he heard the rustle of her dress upon the floor. He felt her close to him. He knew that she knelt down beside him, and again the little hand touched him.

"Good-bye," he faltered.

Then he heard her sobbing and bent over her.

"My child, do you weep for the old man?" he said. "You weep and do not laugh. God bless you."

And a choked voice answered:

"I cry because I am happy. I did not want to go away. I want to stay with you. People that are nice are always nice, even if they are old. I only wonder you could like a little thing like me—so silly and so young—but I am very glad you do."

And then he opened his arms and she crept close to his breast, and he held her there; and whatever people said when the bans were published in Amberly Church, it was no sacrifice: for within that old breast and that young one dwelt unaccountably the twin souls whose bodies should have been of the same age, and no two married people ever loved more fondly than the curate and his girl wife.—*Mrs. Burnett.*

—A well educated young lady of Richmond wants a position as teacher in Danville. She has passed the giggling age, but is not too old to be a very agreeable companion, and the editor of this paper can heartily recommend her to any family desiring an intelligent teacher and companion.—*Danville (Va.) Inquirer*

ANDROMEDA'S NEW STAR.

Most Probably a World in Process of Parturition.

Even to those of us who are not astronomers, the recent appearance of a new star in Andromeda is a fact of the utmost interest and picturesqueness. The nebular hypothesis teaches that all heavenly bodies, including our own sun and its attendant planets, were formed by the slow cooling of gases, first into molten masses of red-hot solid material, slowly to go on cooling and contracting while describing their appointed courses in space.

The existence of nebulæ or cloud-like masses of star matter in the heavens has furnished a strong support to the theory, but until now no one of the nebulæ has afforded us a sight of that consummation to which the hypothesis assumes that their existence and nature tend; no nebulæ has finished the process of world parturition and brought forth its young in our presence.

That is seemingly what has now occurred. The first and most natural assumption of astronomers is that the nebulæ which star-gazers have watched and studied through ages has at last given birth to a sun or a system, and thus set the seal of observed fact upon the theory that worlds and suns and systems are born of star mists in that way.

The assumption that this is what has happened receives support from facts already observed. The nebula in which the new star appears differs from other cloud-like masses of the kind in a way which seems to indicate its greater advancement toward the crisis of world formation. The spectrum of other nebulæ is that of heated gases; the spectrum of this one is that which is given by solid or molten masses, or by gases in a state of extreme compression and condensation. In a word, the spectrum of the nebula indicates that it is in precisely the state in which, according to the nebular theory, it should begin to collect its matter into stars.

Again, when the new star was first seen it was apparently only a "star-like nucleus," which has rapidly developed into a star of the eighth or a greater magnitude. Here, again, we have a strong suggestion of actual star formation in our presence.

If that is what has happened, the occurrence is unquestionably the most important one in its bearings upon the advance of certain knowledge in astronomy that has occurred since men first began to record the results of heavenly observations.

Whatever the explanation may be, the fact is certain that a new star has appeared where there was none before. If it has not been newly formed there, it must be what is called a "variable," that is to say, a star whose brightness undergoes a periodical increase and diminution, and if so, its period of variation must be so great that its last previous access of brightness occurred thousands of years ago, before the date when orderly astronomy records were begun.—*Commercial Advertiser.*

A SECOND-HAND SUIT.

The Kind of a Joke Not Relished by Detroit Dramatics.

"I pelief I want some more lawsuits," said Mr. Dunder, as he entered the Central Station in a highly indignant state of mind yesterday.

"What's the matter this time?" asked the Captain.

"Vhell, I vhant a suit of clothes, you know. Dot oldt suit vhas no good any more. My wife she feels ashamed of me, und my poy Shake looks me all oafer und says:

"'Fadder, peeples vhas shudged by der clothes on deir backs more ash an odder vhay. If you don't get some new clothes peoples vhill say our peesness vhas all gone to pieces.'

"Dot Shake vhas a shmart boy to reason like dot, und I see how it vhas. I go oop on Michigan avenue last night to puy me some suits. Vhell, I look und look. Some vhas for four dollar and some for ten. Eaferythings vhas warranted not to fade, und to fit me like a clock. You see dis suit?"

"Yes."

"You like him?"

"No. That's a second-hand suit and as homely as sin."

"You vhas right. He ask me nine dollar for dis suit, but I don't take him. I laugh at him. I make fun of him. By und by I feel in der pants-pocket. Dere vhas some pocket-book in dere."

"Left there by the former owner of the suit?"

"Dot's how I pelief."

"Felt pretty bulky, didn't it?"

"Felt shust like it vhas crowded mit greenbacks, and I feels tickled all oafer. Captain, I puys dot suit queek as lightning."

"Of course."

"Und I runs haif de vhay home only to find dot it vhas an empty pocket-book. Here it vhas."

"Worth about ten cents."

"Dot's vhat Shake says. Captain, I shall see dot man."

"You can't."

"But I vhas shwindled!"

"You swindled yourself."

"Can't I do sometings?"

"Not a thing."

"Vhell! vheel! Captain, I like to shpoke to you."

"Go on."

"I pays taxes in two wards, and I vhas nominated for Alderman. I can't shtand such shokes on me. I shall go oop to dot blace to-day. I shall take dot shwindler by der neck und fling him down, und vhen he vhas down I shall sit on him und make him eat dis pocket-book! If some clerks interfere it shall be badt for 'em, and if some bolseee come aroundt I vhas a dangerous man. Captain, I warns you in time! Hist! S'death! Keep off der grass."—*Detroit Free Press.*

RECALLING A NAM .

An Herculean Task Which Interferes With the Slumbers of Many Good Citizens.

It requires more of an effort to remember something once forgotten than it does to learn something new. Many a man has tossed on his bed at night trying to remember a name of no importance whatever. This is the way it usually comes about: "Let me see. It was in the spring of fifty-seven, I believe. An old fellow named—named—what was his name? I'll think of it after awhile. Strange I can't think of that name. It was at the end of my tongue a minute ago. Pshaw! Well, no matter." He proceeds with his story, but he is not satisfied. The name would add nothing to the story, but the narrator does not like to be beaten in that way, and at night, while every one else is asleep, he "flops" over and over, trying to think of the name. He begins at A and slowly sounds the letters of the alphabet, but receives no clew to the whereabouts of the absconding cognomen. He gives it up a dozen times, and resolves to have nothing more to do with it, but the first thing he knows he is hard at work again. He dozes, but awakes and resumes his search. He gets up, goes to the water-bucket and just as he raises the dipper to his lips, the name pops into his head. "Humph!" he grunts, "why didn't I think of it at first? Old man Catswell! Catswell, Catswell! I knew it began with a C." He knew no such thing. "Catswell! Well, I'll declare!" He goes back to bed and repeats the name over and over again. The next morning, the first thing he does, is to refer to the story again, but, harrassing circumstance, the name again eludes him. He knows that it begins with an S. He remembers it finally, and is surprised that he forgot it began with a C. In the reduction of flesh, the Banting system can not rival this process. It is said that when a Russian is trying to recall the name of a friend, he shuts himself in a room and permits no one to see him until he has passed through the terrible trial. One of the Russian Generals, whose awful name figured conspicuously in a recent war, once tried to recall the uncompromising name of a relative. He went into a closet. When he went in he was a fat man. When he came out he was offered a position in a side show to do the light work that is generally assigned to the living skeleton.—*Arkansaw Traveler.*

OPIUM IN CHINA.

A Great Crime Carried on With the Consent of An Insincere Government.

Opium is like slavery, or like feudalism—it has grown upon China by the influences of outside nations. The Chinese complain a great deal about the policy of Great Britain in forcing opium upon the country; but then, when we consider the fact that China herself, under the policy of some of the Viceroys, has been growing opium in the hope of driving out the Indian crop, it really was not a matter of discussion, because you were compelled to see that they lacked candor and were disingenuous in their opposition to the opium traffic. I presume that the opium trade will end in this way, that China will grow her own opium and probably extinguish the Indian trade. The Chinese opium is not as good as the Indian opium, but in talking to the officials about the opium question, and in remonstrating with them upon their encouraging its growth in their provinces, and saying that this course on their part led to a distrust of their candor in asking foreign governments to prevent the trade, their response was: "If we must take opium, let us raise it." I would say to them that I thought, considering the conditions of the Chinese population, the want of food and the necessity, as you might say, of cultivating every foot of ground, that it might be better to give the acres where they grew the poppy to wheat, or millet, or corn, or some other food, and that the giving up of so much territory to poppy led to the occasional famines. But they had the theory that by growing the poppy themselves they could prevent the importation of the Indian crop. Li always said that if they had control of the opium trade they would stop it by an edict from the throne; but I question that very much. Opium, like any other vice, will take a generation or two to eradicate. It has gone too far now to be held in check by any legislative or restrictive measure. The suppression of opium in China would, I think, mean revolution, and the Government is not prepared to meet that contingency. At the same time it is a great curse and a great crime.—*John Russell Young, in N. Y. Herald.*

A TOOTH DESTROYER.

The Excessive Use of Common Salt a Great Solvent of Human Teeth.

At a recent meeting of the New York Odontological Society, Dr. E. Parmly Brown said: I will venture the assertion that the excessive use of common salt is one of the main factors in the destruction of human teeth to-day. I am now engaged in collecting some statistics on this point, from which I hope in time to demonstrate, what seems to me to be a fact, that common salt excessively used is a great solvent of the human teeth. If it will injure the human teeth through the chemistry of our systems in some way or other, why might it not also have the effect of preventing a good development of the teeth when taken into the system in excess? I have lately procured some statistics from the Sandwich Islands, from a gentleman who has been there, covering a period of over forty years, that are very suggestive and interesting. Within that period the teeth of the Sandwich Islanders have decayed rapidly, and since they have begun to decay, it has been noticed that the natives are in the habit of biting off great chunks of salt and eating it with their food. According to all accounts, the teeth of the Sandwich Islanders were formerly the most free from decay of any people on the face of the earth, if I remember rightly. You will find that people who eat a great deal of salt and a great deal of sugar are often entirely toothless. I know several instances of candy-store keepers where three generations are entirely toothless. People who eat an excessive amount of salt are tempted to eat large quantities of candy, pickles and vinegar. There seems to be a craving for those substances after the excessive use of salt.—*Boston Budget.*

BUILDING HOUSES.

A Humorist's Advice to a Young Man Who Desires to Be an Architect.

So you are going to be an architect, my son? Well, that is a good—what do you architects call it, profession? Whatever you call it, it is a good calling. Now, I'll tell you what I would do if I were an architect. I would learn to build a house. You pay close attention to that department of architecture, my son, learn to plan a house and it will put money in your purse. "But all architects plan houses; that is what they do?" Oh, no, my son; oh, no. Men have been planning and building houses ever since the eviction at Eden, and they haven't succeeded in making a model yet. All the architectural genius in the world hasn't succeeded in designing a house that is perfectly satisfactory to anybody, and as to building a house that will fit everybody—why, there's the biggest bonanza in Ophir County waiting for the man who can give us that house. Now, the tailor has attained a perfection in his art to which the architect is a stranger. He has designed suits that are models for all civilized men. When Mr. Vanderbilt wants a dress suit his tailor makes him one just like the one he made for the head waiter. And when the head waiter wants a dress suit the tailor gives him one like unto that which Mr. Vanderbilt owes for. The Prince Albert which you wear, my son, is like unto the one which the Prince wears. The tailor has made a coat which fits us all, and we want the architect to make us an easy, comfortable, respectable looking house. If it takes nine tailors to make a man, where are the architects? If you are going to be an architect, my boy, remember what I tell you: Learn to build a house.—*Burdette, in Brooklyn Eagle.*

Avoiding Dead Furrows.

How to avoid the nuisance of "dead furrows" is a problem with all farmers who have regard for the appearance of their fields, and is especially to be desired where irrigation is practiced, or where a field is to be sown in alfalfa or other crop to be mown, and it is desired to secure absolute uniformity in the surface of the ground. When a field is plowed in lands, turning the furrows outward, the result will be a dead furrow in the center, and one from each corner running diagonally to the main one. In this way, too, it will be found that the team will do all the turning on plowed ground, and so large a patch in every land will be trodden down and left in almost as bad a condition as if it had never been plowed. If a field be plowed in small lands, the result is a series of alternate dead furrows and ridges, extremely unsightly, as well as difficult for the operation of the mower and hay-rake, not to mention the almost utter impossibility of properly irrigating such a field if desired, as the major part of the water applied will of course settle in the hollows of the dead furrows and leave the ridges untouched. In order to plow a field without making a dead furrow, then, commence at the middle and turn all the furrows inward. If a right-hand plow is used, the team will do all their turning on unplowed land, and thus avoid trampling upon and packing the loose soil. After the field has been plowed the slight ridge formed by the first two furrows thrown against each other may be removed by a couple of back furrow, and when properly harrowed the field will be found as level as a floor, and superior in every way to those plowed in other styles.—*San Francisco Chronicle.*

The Zero Mark.

Ninety-nine citizens out of one hundred had something to say about "zero" last winter; perhaps not one in one hundred could have told offhand why a point thirty-two degrees below the freezing point on Fahrenheit's thermometer is called zero. For that matter nobody knows. The Fahrenheit scale was introduced in 1720. Like other thermometric scales, it has two fixed points—the freezing point, or rather the melting point of ice, and the boiling point of water. The Centigrade and Reamur call the freezing point zero and measure therefrom in both directions. This is a very natural arrangement. Fahrenheit kept the principle on which he graded his thermometers a secret, and no one has ever discovered it. It is supposed, however, that he considered his zero—thirty-two degrees below freezing—the point of absolute cold or absence of all heat, either because, being about the temperature of melting salt and snow, it was the greatest degree of cold he could produce artificially, or because it was the lowest natural temperament of which he could find any record. The grounds on which Fahrenheit put one hundred and eighty degrees between the freezing and boiling points are likewise unknown.—*Baptist Weekly.*

SOUTHERN SCHOOLS.

Their Efficiency Dependent Upon the Employment of Good Teachers.

Rev. Dr. Mayo, who has so earnestly devoted himself to the work of improving the condition of the Southern schools, realizes fully that the amount of money that can be set apart for education in the average Southern community must necessarily be small, but he is by no means discouraged. He has a very simple theory as to the best way of benefiting them. There is, he holds, only one absolute essential, and that is a good teacher. He does not think it time as yet to spend money for the elegant equipment of model schoolhouses. With him the teacher is the thing. It is gratifying to find this opinion earnestly maintained by so influential an educator, for it is well, in view of the possible appropriation of a large amount of money for educational purposes by the National Government, to inculcate the sentiment that the employment of the best teachers should be the first rule to be observed in its disbursement.—*Current*

PITH AND POINT.

—Some men are born with big heads, some acquire big heads and others have big heads thrust upon them.—*Bill Nye.*

—Pens are weapons of defense that stab and cut like a rapier. It is easier to assassinate with a pen than to slay with the sword.—*N. Y. Independent.*

—The bones of the average man only weigh about twenty-four pounds, and yet some people put on airs and step around as though they weighed a ton.—*Chicago Ledger.*

—A small son of a Raleigh man, when asked if he was not very much frightened when the lightning struck his father's house, replied: "No, de Lawd wasn't gwine to hurt me; it was daddy he was after."—*Raleigh (N. C.) Observer.*

—There have been various answers to the conundrum: Why is a ship called she? We think the proper answer is: Because she is handsomest when she is well-rigged. Wives should cut this out and show it to their husbands.—*Boston Courier.*

—Baby cries, and is sent to a side table. Papa says: "When you have a beard you can sit with papa." The house cat jumps up familiarly beside him. Baby (furiously): "Jump down! You have a beard. Go eat with papa."—*Chicago Journal.*

—"How is it," writes a correspondent, "that the yachts always sail faster in a newspaper account of a race than they do on the water?" That's an easy one to answer, friend. You see, it's the extra "puffing" the boat gets that does the business.—*Yonkers Statesman.*

—"You may say what you like, mother, George no longer loves me." "But, child, how did you get that silly notion into your head?" "Oh, very simply and only too quickly. When he takes me home nowadays he always chooses the shortest road!"—*Chicago Inter-Ocean.*

—"The average American eats fifty-six pounds of sugar a year, against the Englishman's sixty-seven." Despite this fact, however, the average American girl is much sweeter than the English lasses. Probably because she is given more "taffy" than the English girl receives.—*Norristown Herald.*

—A Japanese woman dresses her hair once in every four days. The luxury of hearing one's wife, with the ends of her hair in her teeth and her mouth full of hairpins, talking about the kitchen boiler in the morning before the mirror is never enjoyed by the Japanese husband more than twice a week.—*Chicago Tribune.*

REMARKABLE CHANGES.

Mississippi Steamboating Twenty Years Ago and To-day.

"I tell you," he said, throwing himself back in a heavy arm-chair, "the Mississippi is no longer what it used to be; the railroads have ruined it. There will be no more such steamers as the R. E. Lee, the Richardson, or others of their class built. The steamers used to float all the cotton of the valley to New Orleans, and were built to carry from 5,000 to 8,000 bales. The week, however, which it required a steamer to take it down, is now reduced to twenty-four hours by rail. Railroads are following the coarse of the river, and robbing it of its trade, and I look forward to the day when the Mississippi River will be abandoned entirely in favor of rail.

"Yes," he continued, in answer to a question, "gamblers used to have a picnic along the river; but that day, too, is past. It is not because people have grown better, but because they have less money. I once saw two men in a dispute over a game, rise from their chairs, place their pistols at each other's temples, and fire simultaneously. Their dead bodies were carried away, and the game continued as if nothing had happened. Those were wild days, and are not likely to return.

"The mode of getting other people's money has merely changed in some respects. With the exit of the honest gambler who told his business, we witness the entrance of the sneak thief. But a few days ago a rich planter boarded this steamer off Natchez. While sitting right where we are now, he purchased a paper from a newsboy and was soon lost in its perusal.

"'Colonel,' said a bland young man, a few moments after, 'you have just dropped this,' handing him a fifty-dollar note.

"'I reckon not,' said the old gentleman, as he overlooked his spectacles.

"'I just picked it up under your chair,' replied the young man, 'and see no other way to dispose of it. However, since it seems to belong to neither of us, we might just as well divide it.'

"The plan worked well. The old gentleman passed over $25 in change, and the young man sauntered carelessly out on land. A few minutes after the vessel had taken to water the old gentleman presented the $50 note to the clerk in payment for his fare.

"'Counterfeit!' exclaimed the clerk, and then for the first time the whole truth dawned upon the old man's mind.

"The deckhands are a hard lot. They work, as you see, with a vim while in port, and pass the time until the next is reached in playing 'craps.' They are paid $3.50 a day. When they are called up to get their wages, they divide into little gambling parties at once, and by the time port is reached, of the fifty men paid off, about ten will have all the money. This ten will take one night on land, coming back to the boats dead broke, and on the return trip there will not be a nickel in the whole crew. And the way they can go through a stranger," said the speaker, growing warm, "is a caution. A negro got on board at Vicksburg the other day and fell asleep. It was noticed that his underclothing was new. Quietly the men went to work, stripped him, divided out his underclothing, put him back into his old shoes, shirt and pantaloons, and left him. When that negro awoke and found the change which had been made in him, he was completely mystified. He could not understand how his underclothing could have been stolen without touching the rest."—*Atlanta (Ga.) Constitution.*